



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

August 31, 2005

News Release

MINOT MAN SENTENCED TO 11 YEARS FOR METH CRIMES

MINOT, N.D.—A local man was sentenced here Monday to 11 years in prison after pleading guilty to methamphetamine and ammunition charges, the result of an investigation conducted by: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation, and the Ward County Narcotics Task Force.

LaVerne Pederson, 50, a longtime Minot resident, was sentenced to 132 months in prison, followed by five years of supervised release. Pederson pleaded guilty in May to possession and conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, and to being a fugitive in possession of ammunition.

The conspiracy, which occurred between June 2000 and July 2004, involved Pederson traveling to cities in Colorado, Arizona, and North Dakota to purchase methamphetamine. He then brought the drugs to Minot and sold them to area residents.

State authorities arrested Pederson July 18, 2004 after leading law enforcement officers on a high-speed chase through parts of Ward and McLean Counties. During the chase, Pederson threw a homemade firearm and 9mm ammunition from his speeding car, which police later recovered.

At the time of the chase, Pederson was a fugitive after not appearing for a court hearing in Arizona. He faced charges in February 2004 for allegedly attempting to carjack an elderly couple at gunpoint in Prescott, Ariz., while trying to get to Phoenix to purchase drugs. Pederson still faces those charges in Yavapai County, Ariz.

“This case is an all-too-familiar example of the wreckage brought to North Dakota by people who use and sell methamphetamine,” said Resident Agent-in-Charge Michael Mach of the ICE Grand Forks office. “ICE will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to arrest, prosecute and imprison those who spread this poison in our communities.”

Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Schneider prosecuted the case with assistance from the Ward County State’s Attorney’s office.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.